

CutBank

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Summer 1991

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CUTBANK

36

Summer 1991



CutBank

where the big fish lie

The editors
are pleased to announce
the winner of the 1990-91
Richard Hugo Memorial Poetry Award

Greg Pape

"Wijiji"

published in *CutBank* 36

Judge: James Galvin

and the winner of the 1990-91
A. B. Guthrie, Jr. Short Fiction Award

Kellie Wells

"Telling the Chicken"

published in *CutBank* 35

Judge: Lynn Freed

The Richard Hugo Memorial Poetry Award and the A. B. Guthrie, Jr. Short Fiction Award are granted once each year to work published in *CutBank*. Submissions are accepted from August 15 until February 28. Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for writers' guidelines.

CutBank 36

where the big fish lie

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Please address all correspondence to: *CutBank*, Department of English, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812.

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A. B. Guthrie, Jr.
1900—1991

In not that many years, we have lost Dick Hugo, Dorothy Johnson, Myron Brinig, Norman Maclean and now Bud Guthrie. It seems that an era has passed.

What writer wouldn't envy even the one book—*The Big Sky*—setting a standard of craftsmanship and serious purpose for a generation, giving a state its name, and—Bud would want us to remember—telling a damn good tale.

That book, from 1947, still looms large. "What do you think of it?" I asked Bill Kittredge, across the hall, as I was about to teach it for the first time. "A classic," he said. "It had to be written." And ten years or so later, as we—the seven editors of *The Last Best Place*—began our first of many meetings, that book stood out from the skyline like Ear Mountain, above Bud's home. "Well, we're doing an anthology of Montana writings. What'll we put in for sure?" someone asked. "Ten year too late anyhow," somebody else replied, and most of us knew the rest of that scene in *The Big Sky*:

"She's gone, goddam it! Gone!"

"What's gone?" asked Summers.

Boone could see the whisky in Uncle Zeb's face. It was a face that had known a sight of whisky, likely, red as it was and swollen looking.

"The whole shitaree. Gone, by God, and naught to care sávin' some of us who seen 'er new. . . . This was man's country onc't. Every water full of beaver and a galore of buffler any ways a man looked, and no crampin' and crowdin'. Christ sake!"

And who wouldn't admire being not just a writer, but part of a movement, with Stegner and DeVoto and Joe Howard and others, a group of friends rewriting Western history, taking their homelands back from Hollywood and teaching us all to tell it straight. And who wouldn't admire the guts, over a long career, long after *The Way West* and *These Thousand Hills* and the autobiography, *The Blue Hen's Chick*—the guts to change, to come up with new views and new issues, to keep at the keys day after day.

Like Mike Mansfield and most Montana legends, Guthrie had a no-nonsense style. A few years ago, Jim and Lois Welch were at his house beneath the Front Range, near the Ripley Schemm/Dick Hugo cabin on the Teton River, where Boone had settled a hundred and fifty years ago. Bud had been a long time in the hospital in Bismarck, and was eighty-nine years old. He was frail and sick and not too sure what lay ahead. But as usual, he didn't waste time on sentimentalities or courtesies. "Chrissake," he said, "when do we get to talk politics?"

—Bill Bevis

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CutBank

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CutBank, a Montana magazine with a longstanding tradition of literary excellence, invites you to help continue that tradition. Recent contributors include Stephen Dobyns, Michael Dorris, Louise Erdrich, Patricia Henley, Pattiann Rogers, and William Stafford. Published twice a year; perfect bound.

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